



KANSAS CITY

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2012

# Nature & You

News and Events from Missouri Department of Conservation

## Save the Last Dance

**New book captures the grace and beauty of imperiled prairie chickens and grassland grouse.**

**C**enturies before cities and farms dotted Missouri's landscape, our state was home to vast prairies. Purple prairie coneflowers bloomed in the ocean of grass and bison grazed on the rolling hills. Keeping them company were flocks of greater prairie chickens numbering in the hundreds of thousands. Across the Great Plains and in the West seven species of the grassland grouse family roamed.

Today, prairie chickens are endangered in Missouri. And their close relatives among the grassland grouse birds are all pressured by shrinking habitats. Award-winning wildlife photographer Noppadol Paothong captured their story in pictures in his new book, "Save the Last Dance."

Paothong will visit the Anita B. Gorman Discovery Center on Tuesday, Dec. 4 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m., to share stories from his 11-year journey making the book. He will also do a book signing.

The book, Paothong hopes, will "...be a window for people to glimpse the life and beauty of these extraordinary species."

A male greater prairie chicken's mating call, also known as booming, can be heard over a half-mile away. Paothong's book, written by noted outdoor author Joel M. Vance, provides a loud



*Greater prairie chicken by wildlife photographer Noppadol Paothong.*

call to Americans to preserve the beauty, diversity and dwindling numbers of grassland grouse. The heath hen, a close relative of the prairie chicken once found in the East, is already extinct.

At the Discovery Center, Noppadol will discuss his methods in documenting these unusual birds by making captivating images of mating rituals and their habits. He also will share some outdoor photography tips. Paothong, a native of Thailand, has in his 18-year career become recognized as one of America's finest professional outdoor photographers.

During December, an exhibit of photographs used in the book will be on display. The exhibit will showcase

various species of grassland grouse during changing seasons.

Paothong and Vance in the book strive to increase the awareness of the plight of grassland grouse as urbanization and changes in agriculture diminish habitat. "It is vital that people work together to secure a future for these remarkable birds," they say.

"Through this journey, I've grown to appreciate even a breeze on a prairie," Paothong said. "I believe and hope, if a person like me – who grew up in a city on a continent 10,000 miles away – can fall in love with these birds, anybody can. If only they get to know them."

– Brandon Pope, Education Specialist

## To be or not to be...

### *The Greater Prairie Chicken in Missouri*

**T**he fact that the greater prairie chicken existed in Missouri at the time of settlement is well documented. When the first Europeans arrived, Missouri had over 15 million acres of prairie and being a grassland bird, prairie chickens thrived. Estimates place the pre-settlement population of prairie chickens well into the hundreds of thousands, perhaps even over a million.

Now there are only 300 to 500 prairie chickens left in the entire state. The main cause of the decline is loss of habitat. It is estimated that a continuous area of at least 2,000 acres is the minimum requirement to maintain a breeding population. There are now fewer than 90,000 acres of prairie in Missouri and only three of those prairies are of sufficient size to support this most remarkable prairie denizen.

Prairie chickens require a diverse habitat during their life cycle. Short grasses are needed during the mating season, mid length for nesting and protection from predators and longer grasses for protection from winter storms. In order to provide this mix, it is often necessary for a land owner to change how they manage their land – moving from practices

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# Burr Oak Woods CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER

Located in Blue Springs, Missouri, one mile north of I-70 and one mile west of MO 7 on Park Road. Six trails, 1,071 wooded acres, two picnic areas, indoor wildlife viewing area, 3,000 gallon native fish and turtle aquarium, hands-on nature exhibits, gift shop, and sales of fishing and hunting permits.



1401 NW PARK ROAD  
BLUE SPRINGS, MISSOURI 64015

**HOURS:** Nature Center  
Tuesday–Friday: 7 AM–6 PM  
Saturday: 8 AM–5 PM  
Area and Trails  
Daily: 7 AM–6 PM  
Daylight Savings Time: 7 AM–8 PM  
Closed Thanksgiving, day after  
Thanksgiving, Christmas & New Year's

**HOW TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:**  
Programs are free. **Call 816-228-3766** to sign up for a *Registration required* program on or after the first business day of that month.  
<http://mdc.mo.gov/node/280>

## A SENSE OF FALL HIKE

NOVEMBER 10 / SATURDAY / 12 NOON–2:30 PM  
*No registration required* (Ages 10 and up) Bring your camera and hiking shoes for a leisurely fall hike. Feed your soul by immersing all your senses in the season of autumn. We will take it slow to capture the moment. This moderate 2 mile hike begins and ends at the nature center.

## BABES IN THE WOODS: LEAF LEAPING

NOVEMBER 13 / TUESDAY / 11:00 AM–12 NOON  
*Registration required* (Babes under 36 months) There is nothing quite like the scent of fall and shuffling through autumn leaves. Join the fun as we crunch, toss and hide in a forest blanketed by colorful fallen leaves. This adventure is sure to help connect you and your little one to nature.

## WILD EDIBLES: NOVEMBER'S NATURE NUTS

NOVEMBER 13 / TUESDAY / 1:00–3:00 PM  
*Registration required* (Adults) Discover the delicious nut producing trees native to Missouri. These same trees are essential to the very survival of some of our wild residents! Investigate tasty, nutritious treats that you can prepare for your own family while learning how wise use ensures enough for our wild families as well.

## CONSERVATION KIDS CLUB: YOU BE THE NATURALIST PART I

NOVEMBER 13 / TUESDAY / 6:00–7:30 PM  
*Registration required* (Ages 7–13) So, you want to be a naturalist? I don't blame you! We love our job. It is our job to teach people about what we love...Nature! This is your chance to learn how. Choose your favorite plant or wild animal and learn how to create a fun-filled hands-on program about your chosen topic.

## HOME SCHOOL:

### MISSOURI'S WILD CATS AND DOGS

NOVEMBER 14 / WEDNESDAY / 10:00–11:30 AM  
FOR AGES 6–8, 9–11, 12–18 OR 1:00–2:30 PM FOR AGES 6–8 *Registration required*  
Cats and dogs can make great pets, but bobcats, mountain lions, coyotes and foxes make great predators! Play games, see these wild hunters up close (pelts and skulls) and learn how they keep prey populations in check.

### LITTLE ACORNS: OWL BE SEEING YOU

NOVEMBER 14 / WEDNESDAY / 10:00–11:00 AM  
OR 1:00–2:00 PM  
*Registration required* (Ages 3–5) My, what big eyes you have! I'm not talking about the big bad wolf. Missouri has a variety of mesmerizing owls. We don't get to see these stealthy birds much but we'll learn some fun facts about these nocturnal animals.

## COOKING WILD: VENISON

NOVEMBER 17 / SATURDAY / 1:00–2:30 PM  
*Registration required* (Adults) It is deer season, and for many Missourians, that means fun, outdoor adventure and a freezer full of venison! Venison is organic, low in fat, and absolutely delicious. Join us as we dig in to some great recipes including sausage, jerky, roast and others. What's your favorite venison recipe?

## ROCKIN' & READIN' NATURE TALES

NOVEMBER 24 / SATURDAY / 11:00–12 NOON  
*Walk-in* (Ages 2 and up) Join us for a story hour as we lead you on fantastic nature adventures! We will meet butterflies, birds, mammals and all sorts of magnificent creatures! We will cross rivers, discover mysteries within the forest and fly across the prairies. Our imaginations are the only limits.

## LETTERBOXING

NOVEMBER 24 / SATURDAY / 1:00–3:00 PM  
*Registration required* (Families with children ages 6 and up) Letterboxing is a great way to combine navigational skills with artistry and adventure while exploring the great outdoors. Your family will work together to make your own letterboxing stamp. We will learn how to use a compass and read a map and then we'll head out on a letterboxing treasure hunt!



## WREATH MAKING

DECEMBER 1 / SATURDAY / 10:00 AM–12 NOON  
*Registration required beginning November 1* (Adults) Create a stunning natural wreath for your home! We will provide evergreens, dried native grasses, pine cones and other natural embellishments. Please bring a small wire frame wreath as a base for your creation.

## KIDS CRAFT DAY

DECEMBER 8 / SATURDAY / 10:00 AM–1:00 PM  
*Walk-in* (All ages) Kids Craft Day is a great way to make the holidays special. Make one-of-a-kind natural presents to give to the people you love this holiday season. Don't forget to create your own gift wrap before you leave!

## PROGRAMS & EVENTS NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

### WILD PUPPETS!

NOVEMBER 3 / SATURDAY / 10:00–10:30 AM  
OR 10:45–11:15 AM  
*No registration required* (Families, the program is designed for preschoolers and kindergartners) Go wild with some fun-loving, fuzzy, scaly or feathered puppet friends and learn how they prepare for the winter!

### DISCOVER NATURE:

#### CAMPFIRE S'MORES AND NIGHT HIKE

NOVEMBER 3 / SATURDAY / 6:30–8:30 PM  
*Registration required beginning October 23* (Families) Learn new techniques to help your children seek and not hide from the creatures of the night. We will discover the night's wonders as we stalk down the trail in search of nocturnal life. Then, warm up next to a cozy campfire with gooey s'mores.





#### CONSERVATION KIDS CLUB:

##### YOU BE THE NATURALIST PART II

DECEMBER 11 / TUESDAY / 6:00-7:30 PM

*Registration required* (Ages 7-13) What does it take to be a Naturalist? Last month, we picked our favorite thing in nature to share with others and learned about it. Now it is time to share with the rest of Kids Club. We will each get a chance to lead the group in exploring the plants or animals that we love so much.

#### LITTLE ACORNS:

##### SWEET DREAMS, TIME TO HIBERNATE

DECEMBER 12 / WEDNESDAY / 10:00-11:00 AM

OR 1:00-2:00 PM *Registration required*

(Ages 3-5) It's that time of year when many of our resident wildlife take a long winter nap. We'll learn what hibernation is and which animals we won't see again until next spring.

#### HOME SCHOOL: NATURE'S ODDBALLS

DECEMBER 12 / WEDNESDAY / 10:00-11:30 AM

FOR AGES 6-8, 9-11, 12-18 OR 1:00-2:30 PM FOR

AGES 6-8 *Registration required*

Did you know there is an animal that doesn't have a mouth? How about one with no eyes or ears? Missouri is home to some interesting, strange and unusual animals. Even some of our well-known wildlife have unusual traits. Join us as we uncover some of the odd critters that call our state home.

#### EVERGREENS AND DRIED FLOWERS

DECEMBER 15 / SATURDAY / 11:00 AM-12 NOON

OR 1:00-2:00 PM

*Registration required* (Ages 8 and up – youngsters 8-15 must be accompanied by an adult) Use your creativity to create a beautiful seasonal door decoration. You will learn how to use evergreens and dried plant materials to create a stunning gift or holiday decoration. All materials will be supplied.

#### DISCOVER NATURE:

##### WINTER GEOCACHING

DECEMBER 22 / SATURDAY / 10:00 AM-12 NOON

*Registration required* (Families) Geocaching is a great way to merge technology, outdoor skills and family fun! Bring your sense of adventure as we teach the basics of geocaching and let you set out in search of secret caches together.

#### DISCOVER NATURE: BURR BURR OAK WINTER ADVENTURE GAMES

DECEMBER 27 / THURSDAY / 8:00 AM-4:00 PM

*Registration required* (Ages 8-17) Don't be stuck inside all week. If you love to be outdoors, and would like to learn new skills, then join us on your Christmas vacation for this winter adventure. You have been selected to participate in the fun-filled Burr Oak Woods Games. May the odds be

ever in your favor. Your training will include Shelter Building, In Search of Food and Water, Wilderness First Aid, SOS, Finding Your Way, Tracking, Camouflage, Archery and Primitive Hunting Skills. After learning how to build a fire and sharing a campfire lunch, put your new skills to use in the Burr Oak Woods Nature Arena!

#### CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT FOR CHILDREN

DECEMBER 28 / FRIDAY / 10:00 AM-1:00 PM

*Registration required* (Ages 8-17) This Christmas vacation, help make a difference! Join us as we leave our warm homes to venture outside with binoculars, bird guides and data sheets in hand to take part in the second annual Burr Oak Woods Christmas Bird Count. The data collected allows biologists to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America. We will begin the day with Binocular and Bird Identification 101 in the classroom and in the solarium. We will then divide into small groups and head outdoors to count as many species of birds at Burr Oak Woods as we can in two hours. Which group will find the most species or the most unusual bird?

#### NATURE FILM FESTIVAL

DECEMBER 29 / SATURDAY / 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

*Walk-in* (All ages) Join us to celebrate the end of 2012 with our annual film festival. This year we are featuring pioneers of conservation. Join us at 11:00 am for A Sense of Wonder, the story of Rachel Carson and at 1:00 pm for Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for our Time. We will also be showing other nature movies and short documentaries throughout the day. Sit back and enjoy these spectacular films.

#### ROCKIN' & READIN' NATURE TALES

DECEMBER 29 / SATURDAY / 11:00 AM-12 NOON

*Walk-in* (Ages 2 and up) Join us for a story hour as we lead you on fantastic nature adventures! We will meet butterflies, birds, mammals and all sorts of magnificent creatures! We will cross rivers, discover mysteries within the forest and fly across the prairies. Our imaginations are the only limits.



Competitive turkey caller  
Jake Hindman.

## Calling all wildlife

With an energetic and down-home approach, **Jake Hindman** of Festus, MO delivers presentations on game calling, combined with stories about growing up in the outdoors in the river hills of southern MO. He appeals to audiences of all ages, connecting the crowd with the natural world and emphasizing the importance of conservation. As a competitive turkey caller Jake has won or placed in over 25 competitions and holds titles in four different states. He has appeared on the Missouri Outdoors television show, along with numerous radio shows and in the September 2012 issue of the *Missouri Conservationist* magazine. Join us **Saturday, December 8** from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm for this special presentation. All ages invited.

## Photography Exhibit

Burr Oak Woods Nature Center will be featuring Laura Bovard, nature photographer, for the month of December. Visitors are welcome to view Laura's Missouri wildlife slide show on **Saturday, December 8** in the Burr Oak Woods Nature Center auditorium from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. A local resident, Laura shares her love for nature through candid photography of



Missouri's fascinating wildlife as well as colorful floral displays. Following the slide show there will be a special meet and greet the artist event.

## Nature's Beauty will be on display during November

Enjoy the remarkable photographic display of the Iamagmakers Photo Club of Blue Springs on display the month of November. Images will highlight nature, local wildlife and landscapes. For more information about this photo club, check out their website. [www.pbases.com/iamagmakers](http://www.pbases.com/iamagmakers)

## What's for dinner?

Join us as we feed the critters on exhibit at Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center every Saturday and Wednesday at 3:00 p.m.



# Lake City

## SHOOTING RANGE & OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER

Located on 60 acres of forests and fields near Blue Springs, Missouri, six miles north of I-70 on MO 7 and two miles east of MO 7 on Truman Road in Landahl Park. Facilities include an outdoor education center, archery, pistol, rifle and shotgun ranges, including skeet and trap.



28505 E. TRUMAN ROAD  
LANDAHL PARK  
BUCKNER, MISSOURI 64016

HOURS: May 1 – September 15  
Wednesday–Sunday: Noon–6 PM  
September 16 – April 30  
Wed.–Sunday: Noon–4:30 PM  
Closed Monday & Tuesday  
and all state holidays

FACILITIES AND FEES: Available for individual or group use. Call for information and possible restrictions.

- Rifle/pistol range: \$3.00 booth per hour
- Trap/Skeet: \$3.00 per round per person
- Archery range: \$3.00 per person per hour

HOW TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 816-249-3194 to sign up for a *Registration required* program.

<http://mdc.mo.gov/node/282>

### BASIC HANDGUN

DECEMBER 16 / SUNDAY / 9:00–11:00 AM  
*Registration required* (Ages 18 and up) This is a novice class for people who have little or no experience in handling and shooting a handgun. Topics that will be covered will include safety in the home, types of handguns, different parts of the handgun, the variety of calibers, ammunition and marksmanship. Class includes range time.

### HUNTER EDUCATION CLASS

DECEMBER 7 / FRIDAY / 6:00–9:00 PM  
DECEMBER 8 / SATURDAY / 8:00 AM–4:00 PM  
*Online registration only at <http://mdc.mo.gov/node/9720>* (Ages 11 and up) The goal of hunter education classes is to produce safer, more knowledgeable, responsible and involved hunters. Discover the joys of hunting in this two day class designed to meet all requirements for those who wish to hunt using firearms. Registration is required for this class.

## Extended Hours for the Shooting Ranges

### DEER SIGHT-IN

With deer season just around the corner the metro ranges will be extending their hours to accommodate all the hunters in the area.

**LAKE CITY RANGE:** The extended hours for the range will be Wednesday–Sunday from 10:00 am – 4:30 pm starting October 24 – November 9, 2012. We will return to our normal winter hours of operate starting November 10 which are 12:00 pm – 4:30 pm. Lake City will be closed on Mondays and Tuesdays throughout the year.

**PARMA WOODS RANGE:** Extended hours will be Friday – Tuesday from 10:00 am – 4:30 pm. These hours will be in effect from October 19 – November 11, 2012. Parma Woods will be closed November 12 for Veteran's Day. We will return to our normal winter hours on Tuesday, November 13. Winter hours will be Friday – Tuesday from 12:00 pm – 4:30 pm. Parma Woods will be closed throughout the year on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

*These increases in hours by both ranges should reduce the waiting times and provide additional opportunities for the public to practice and become proficient with their hunting firearms.*

### IT'S MORE THAN CHRONOGRAPHING...

DECEMBER 14 / FRIDAY / 6:00–8:30 PM AND  
DECEMBER 15 / SATURDAY / 9:00–11:00 AM  
*Registration required* (Adults) A chronograph tells the shooter the speed of the projectile at a given distance. But did you know it also tells a lot about the trajectory of a bullet down range, accuracy and much more. There is a significant amount of work by the shooter prior to a chronograph. Learn a new way to get you and your rifle ready for the next hunt.



## Late season deer hunting

As the trees begin to change their colors and the warm air turns to frosty mornings, most hunters grab their bow or rifle and start practicing for the upcoming weeks. The bulk of the hunters in the field rely solely on one little stretch of time during deer season known as the "rut".

Whether you are a meat hunter or a rack hunter, this short time called the rut is when the majority of the deer hunters in Missouri devote their hunting time too. While a large number of deer are harvested during this short time, some of the best hunting is yet to come. What hunters call the "late season" is from December through January. As winter begins, deer are at one of the most vulnerable stages during the hunting season.

While the average hunters don't want to endure the cold temperature, they are really missing a grand opportunity. This time frame really congregates the deer to food sources. Find the food source, whether it's a green field or a small honeysuckle thicket and you will find success. This time of year you see deer in large numbers, numbers that are probably higher than you have seen all during the rut. If you want a fat doe or a set of antlers to hang on the wall the late season is a great time to have success.

– Dave Glaskey, Resource Assistant

## PROGRAMS & EVENTS NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

### INTRODUCTION TO METALLIC CARTRIDGE RELOADING: PISTOL

NOVEMBER 29 / THURSDAY / 6:00–8:30 PM AND  
NOVEMBER 30 / FRIDAY / 6:00–8:30 PM  
*Registration required* (Adults) If you have ever been interested in reloading your own pistol cases, this is a good way to get started. We will cover many different topics of reloading cartridges including reloading equipment, safety concerns when reloading, loading data and more.

### BASIC SHOTGUNNING

DECEMBER 1 / SATURDAY / 9:00–11:00 AM  
*Registration required* (Ages 12 and up) This is a novice class for people who have little or no experience in handling and shooting a shotgun. Topics that will be covered are safety, parts of a shotgun, gauges of shotguns, shot shells, patterning your shotgun and shooting techniques. Class includes range time.



# Parma Woods

## SHOOTING RANGE & OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER

Located in Platte County, Missouri. Go west of downtown Parkville on Route FF to River Road, then west 3 miles to the entrance located just west of I-435. Facilities are available for individual or group use and include a rifle/pistol range, shotgun patterning range, and archery range.



15900 NW RIVER ROAD  
(MAIL) PO BOX 14024  
PARKVILLE, MISSOURI 64152

HOURS: May 1 – September 30

Friday – Sunday: 10 AM – 4 PM

Monday & Tuesday: 2 PM – 8 PM

October 1 – April 30

Friday – Tuesday: Noon – 4:30 PM

Closed all state holidays

FACILITIES AND FEES: Available for indi

- Rifle/pistol range: \$3.00 booth per hour
- Shotgun patterning range: \$3.00 per hour
- Archery range: \$3.00 per person per hour

HOW TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 816-891-9941 to sign up for a *Registration required* program.

<http://mdc.mo.gov/node/283>

## PROGRAMS & EVENTS NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

### HUNTER EDUCATION CLASS

NOVEMBER 6-8 / TUESDAY-THURSDAY / 6:00-10:00 PM *Online registration only at <http://mdc.mo.gov/node/9720>*

(Ages 11 and up) This course is required in Missouri for all hunters born on or after January 1, 1967. The minimum age is 11 on or before the first day of the class. Though Missouri doesn't, many other states require that non-

resident hunters be certified regardless of age. Those wishing to go west in search of big game should keep this in mind. If you haven't gotten your certification yet, register to attend this three evening course online at [www.mdc.mo.gov](http://www.mdc.mo.gov)



### DISCOVER NATURE: DEER PROCESSING

NOVEMBER 17 / SATURDAY / 8:00 AM-12 NOON  
*Registration required* (Ages 8 and up) Tired of paying a processor to cut up and package your deer meat? Some people try to hack their way through it themselves, but often aren't happy with the finished product. With 20+ years of practice and too many deer to count, our instructor will show you a cheap and simple, yet effective method to process your own. Learn how the different cuts of meat relate to those you buy in the store.

### DISCOVER NATURE: CANADA GOOSE HUNTING SEMINAR

NOVEMBER 30 / FRIDAY / 6:00-9:00 PM  
*Registration required* (Ages 11 and up) Canada goose numbers are steadily increasing, which



leads to increased hunting opportunities. If you have ever been interested in trying your luck at goose hunting, or wanting to know what it is all about you should join us at the range for a seminar that will teach you what you need to know.

### DISCOVER NATURE: WINTER TREE ID

DECEMBER 9 / SUNDAY / 6:00-8:00 PM  
*Registration required* (Ages 11 and up) Many common trees are relatively easy to identify in the summer when they have all their leaves. As winter approaches these leaves fall off and the trees look different. Attend this hands-on workshop to learn the tricks to tree identification throughout the seasons.



### SAUSAGE AND JERKY MAKING

DECEMBER 12 / WEDNESDAY / 6:00-8:00 PM  
*Registration required* (All Ages) Making sausage and jerky is a great way to utilize parts of your game animals that are less than desirable when used in other ways. There is no great mystery to making these and in this course we'll talk all about the equipment and techniques needed to make several different kinds. We'll also show you the basic processes. You never know, samples may be available as well.

### BASIC METALLIC CARTRIDGE RELOADING

DECEMBER 13 / THURSDAY / 6:00-9:00 PM  
*Registration required* (Ages 11 and up) Reloading metallic cartridges is often shrouded in mystery and very intimidating to newcomers. Discover how easy it can be to get started. Class topics include steps to reload your own ammunition, reading a reloading manual, differences in equipment, case preparation, how to set up the reloading dies, what to do when things aren't quite right and reloading safety. This class is free of charge and all equipment and components are provided. All we ask is that you bring a good attitude and willingness to learn a new skill. Safety glasses are provided.

## Enjoying Nature in the Winter



The first cool breezes of fall blow in a flurry of emotions deep inside most people. The icy chills and the destroying frosts signal that summer is over. While nature is busy preparing for the long winter in the outdoors, most folks that I know are preparing for a long winter indoors. That seems a little sad to me.

Those crisp cool days signal something deep inside me too. They stir my emotions and manifest excitement for the upcoming months. You see, I know that some of the best times you can have in the outdoors happen in the winter. Here are a couple things you should try this winter, just make sure you take the whole family out with you.

**Count deer.** I can remember this being one of my favorite things to do when I was a kid and I still enjoy it today. I used to look forward to a couple inches of snow to fall because it made it easier. Wait until the roads are cleared off but there is still some snow on the ground. Then load up in the car and drive around. See how many deer you can count as you drive around. Then try to beat your high scores. A camera can help record the fun.

**Follow a trail.** This one is easiest with a little snow too. Step one is finding an animal track. It doesn't matter what kind it is. Then follow it wherever it goes. I promise that you will learn a lot about the animal as you follow along. If you're lucky, you might even find the animal that left its mark. Just take care not to get lost and make sure you have permission to do this on private property.

For a guide to places to track winter animals or watch them during drives, visit [www.mdc.mo.gov](http://www.mdc.mo.gov) and click on the link for conservation areas. Search for the conservation area closest to you and go outside and enjoy winter's beauty.

— Nathan Woodland,  
Parma Woods Range Supervisor

Located in Kansas City, Missouri, just east of the Plaza near 47th and Troost. Six hands-on workshops explore Missouri's fish, forest, and wildlife with a Lewis and Clark theme. Discovery Center is a showcase for environmental architecture with four acres of native landscaping. Buy books and hunting /fishing permits at the gift shop.



4750 TROOST AVENUE  
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64110

HOURS: Monday – Friday: 8 AM – 5 PM  
1st & 3rd Tuesdays: 8 AM – 9 PM  
1st & 3rd Saturdays: 9 AM – 4 PM  
Closed all state holidays

HOW TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:  
Programs are free. **Call 816-759-7300** to sign up for a *Registration required* program.  
<http://mdc.mo.gov/node/281>

## NATURE NUTS STORY TIME

NOVEMBER 3 / SATURDAY / 10:00–11:00 AM  
OR 1:00–2:00 PM  
NOVEMBER 17 / SATURDAY / 10:00–11:00 AM  
OR 1:00–2:00 PM  
DECEMBER 1 / SATURDAY / 10:00–11:00 AM  
OR 1:00–2:00 PM  
DECEMBER 15 / SATURDAY / 10:00–11:00 AM  
OR 1:00–2:00 PM  
*Walk-in* (All ages) Join volunteer naturalists for a fantastic journey through forests, streams and other magical places as they read select books. Children will participate in hands-on nature activities.

## FOR THE BIRDS

NOVEMBER 6 / TUESDAY / 6:00–7:30 PM  
*No registration required* (Ages 8 and up)  
Do house wrens need houses, apartments or duplexes? Help the wren population by providing habitat in the Woodworking for Wildlife workshop. Build a wren house and learn important facts to make this new real estate a hit with the wren population.

## TALKIN' TURKEY!

NOVEMBER 17 / SATURDAY / 10:00 AM–2:30 PM  
*Walk-in* (All ages) Are you prepared for the big Thanksgiving feast? Do you want to mix things up a bit? Join us for the fourth annual Thanksgiving cooking event where we will blow the top off of traditional. You will be introduced to outdoor cooking techniques, new recipes and Dutch oven basics. Cooking starts at 10 a.m. with sampling at 12:30 p.m.

## TURKEY DAY

NOVEMBER 17 / SATURDAY / 10:00 AM–2:30 PM  
*Walk-in* (All ages) It is a popular fact that Benjamin Franklin suggested that the Wild Turkey be selected as the symbol of the United States. Join us as we learn what makes this bird so unique. We'll find out how they search for food, create turkey calls, hats and take part in more activities focusing on one of our favorite feathered friends.

## FURBEARERS OF MISSOURI

NOVEMBER 20 / TUESDAY / 6:00–8:00 PM  
*Walk-in* (All ages) Did you know beavers make their thick fur waterproof with oily secretions from their scent glands? Mammals are one of six main classes of animals and are one of Missouri's natural resources. Come learn about the many mammals that call Missouri home while exploring the various characteristics, including furs, tracks and skulls that make them individually unique. Create your very own furbearer to share with your friends and family.

## REGAL EAGLES

DECEMBER 1 / SATURDAY / 10:00 AM–2:30 PM  
*Walk-in* (All ages) Did you know Missouri is one of the leading bald eagle states? Each fall, thousands of these great birds migrate south from their nesting sites in Canada and the Great Lakes Region. Eagles take up residency wherever they can find open water and plentiful food.



Due to our big rivers, many reservoirs, and open wetlands, Missouri is especially attractive to these magnificent birds. Today we celebrate eagles by constructing an eagle's nest, testing your wingspan and learning the habits of these regal raptors.

## DISCOVER NATURE: OUTDOOR COOKING

DECEMBER 1 / SATURDAY / 10:00 AM–12 NOON OR 1:00–3:00 PM  
*Registration required* (Ages 10 and up) Smell the aroma and sample a taste of a variety of delicious meals created in the great outdoors. Learn tips and recipes from our staff as we discover the benefits and fun of cooking meals outside of the kitchen that are sure to be enjoyed by the entire family.



## MAKING OF "SAVE THE LAST DANCE" BOOK

DECEMBER 4 / TUESDAY / 7:00–8:00 PM  
*Walk-in* (All Ages) In this program, Noppadol Paothong, professional wildlife photographer, will share stories from his 11-year journey of making his book, "Save the Last Dance - A Story of North American Grassland Grouse." He's spent over a decade documenting



these highly endangered birds, making captivating images of the species' mating rituals and habitats. He will also share interesting videos from behind the scenes. This book strives to rescue grassland grouse from the brink of extinction by showing the world what it stands to lose if these species are allowed to disappear forever. Copies of the book will be available for sale. Author will sign copies following the presentation

## PROGRAMS & EVENTS NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

### SCOUT DISCOVERY DAY

NOVEMBER 3 / SATURDAY / 10:00 AM–2:30 PM  
*Walk-in* (All ages) Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Brownies, Cadets, Cub Scouts and Webelos join us for a day of hands-on activities designed for fun and rank achievement. We'll have stations and exhibits set-up to provide opportunities to help meet the skill and knowledge requirements for assorted conservation related badges focused on outdoor skills and nature. Explore the life of animals and habitats that call Missouri home.

Try your hand at new skills including: pellet guns, knot tying, tree identification, compass, fire starting and more. Both individual scouts and troops are welcome. Don't miss out on this day created especially for Scouts!





### NATIVE HOLIDAYS

DECEMBER 15 / SATURDAY / 10:00 AM –2:00 PM  
*Walk-in* (All ages) Thinking of making the holidays a little greener this season? Join us at the Discovery Center as we use natural materials to create holiday crafts that will add charm to your traditional holiday decorations. Create a lasting memory you and your family will be sure to remember for years to come!

### BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS

DECEMBER 15 / SATURDAY / 10:30 AM–12 NOON OR 1:00–2:30PM  
*No registration required* (All ages) Gain confidence and some new skills as we enjoy the great outdoors through bird watching. Using simple field guides and binoculars (both provided) we will cover some easy tricks to locate and identify common backyard birds. Dress appropriately for a short hike as we will go outside to see what birds we can find.

### DISCOVERY CENTER VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

DECEMBER 18 / TUESDAY  
Discovery Center is honoring our volunteers tonight, so the building will close to the public at 5:00 p.m.



*Discover how black bears survive a Missouri winter.*

### THE BEAR NECESSITIES

DECEMBER 26 / WEDNESDAY / 10:00–11:30 AM OR 12 NOON–2:00 PM  
DECEMBER 27 / THURSDAY / 10:00–11:30 AM OR 12 NOON–2:00 PM  
DECEMBER 28 / FRIDAY / 10:00–11:30 AM OR 12 NOON–2:00 PM  
*Walk-in* (All ages) When the weather outside is frightful, being a mammal is so delightful. Opossums can lose up to 45% of their body weight and still survive over the winter. Discover how wild animals survive the snow, ice and cold of the winter months. Learn how to build a bear's den and experience other survival techniques animals use to endure the winter.



## Turkey Time

As we approach Thanksgiving, we look towards our dinner table for valued family time. The table is covered with food from the land as we gather to give thanks for a bountiful year. The turkey rests at the center, ready to be carved. For some, this is the only turkey they know. However, turkeys mean more to Missouri than supplying the entrée to a feast.

Turkeys are truly part of America's rich heritage. As Benjamin Franklin once said: "For the Truth the Turkey is in Comparison [with the bald eagle] a much more respectable Bird, and withal a true original Native of America... He is besides, though a little vain & silly, a Bird of Courage, and would not hesitate to attack a Grenadier of the British Guards who should presume to invade his Farm Yard with a red Coat on." The famous opinion from Benjamin Franklin may be seen as comical today, but he had a sound argument. To Benjamin Franklin, the turkey was a bird ready to fight against its oppressors, perhaps a trait that turkey hunters can attest for.

When Missouri was being settled, the people saw no need to tame turkeys. The sheer abundance of the animal "guaranteed" the settlers constant food. This lasted until the 1950s. Turkeys had been hunted until near extinction. A conservation effort was then put into place to save Missouri's wild turkeys. Our turkey population has been growing and thriving since 1985. This short turn-around for the wild turkey proves Franklin's point: turkeys are fighters.

To honor the turkey's strong past as we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving, the Discovery Center will be hosting a Turkey Day **Saturday, Nov. 17.** Come prepared to have fun, and sample an entire holiday meal prepared "campout" style outdoors. Learn all about turkeys as we "Talk Turkeys" and make a take-home craft. Gobble, Gobble!

– Sierra Buck, MDC intern

## Where Bald Eagles Soar

The winter birding list for the Discovery Center includes some unlikely visitors for a mostly urban environment. Feathered friends like cedar waxwings, bluebirds, and Cooper's hawks are exciting to see, but don't compare to spotting a bald eagle soaring high above the neighborhood.

Two winters ago, a pair of bald eagles set up shop for a week along Brush Creek between the Plaza and the Blue River to the east. They were attracted to open water and flocks of migrating waterfowl along the creek corridor. Will the eagles return this year? We hope so! Where did they come from?

They came from the north. Missouri has become a winter vacation hot spot for thousands of bald eagles migrating south from their nesting range in Canada and the Great Lakes. Because our big rivers, big reservoirs and proximity to migration routes of huge flocks of waterfowl, our state is especially attractive to eagles. If the lakes don't freeze, they'll spend several months here before heading back north in late February.

It wasn't long ago that there were few, if

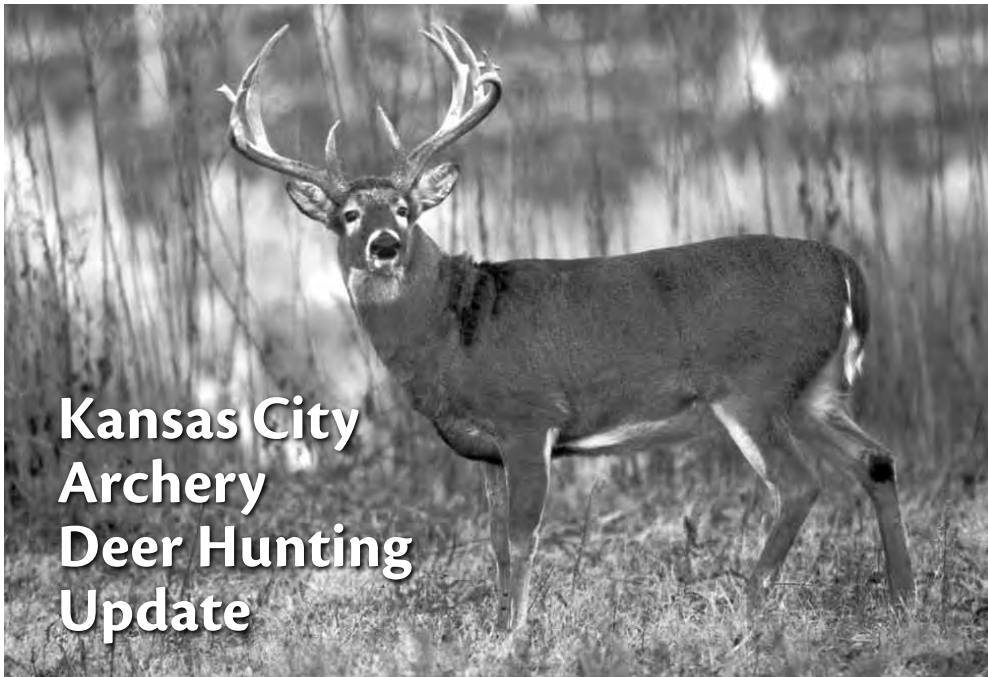


any bald eagles in Missouri. Habitat destruction, and the effects of herbicides and pesticides such as DDT decimated the birds' numbers. The Federal Eagle Protection Act of 1975 and the banning of DDT were important steps in restoring eagle populations.

Today the birds are back and many pairs of nesting bald eagles call Missouri home year round thanks to a nesting restoration program started in the 1980s. Our state is home to over 300 resident bald eagles and the number of nests is increasing every year.

So be on the lookout for eagles. With a six to eight foot wingspan, white head and tail, and a large yellow beak, bald eagles are not hard to identify. The best place to see many eagles in one place is at Eagle Days at Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge where people flock to see hundreds of eagles and thousands of migrating waterfowl every year. Closer to Kansas City, the Smithville Lake Eagle Days event is in January. For more times and events visit [www.mdc.mo.gov](http://www.mdc.mo.gov).

Eagles can also be seen in Kansas City near the Missouri and Kansas Rivers or at area reservoirs like Blue Springs Lake and Longview Lake. If you can't make it to an eagle event this winter, keep a sharp eye open near rivers and lakes, or while visiting the Discovery Center. You may be surprised to find an eagle landing near you!



## Kansas City Archery Deer Hunting Update

As the 2011-2012 archery deer season ended the Kansas City Archery Program saw yet another increase in urban deer harvest. A total of 639 deer were taken in Kansas City through archery methods from managed hunts that included 93 properties consisting of private and public land. This urban archery program continues to grow every year as additional properties are enrolled and more hunters participate. A property becomes enrolled simply when a landowner calls about the program and is interested in their property joining. After the initial Memorandum of Agreement and MDC safety precautionary inspection of the property is taken, the designated Hunt Manager for the property then collaborates with MDC Urban Wildlife Biologist – Joe DeBold to fulfill the necessary agreement. The overall goals of the program are to reduce the numbers of urban

deer in order to alleviate the frequency of deer/vehicle collisions. Also to reduce the number of public complaints on nuisance urban deer that cause monetary damage to residential home owner's property.

New for 2012-2013 in the metropolitan area there are additional parks within Jackson County Parks & Recreation Department including; Blue River Parkway, Blue Springs Park and Landahl Park. This is yet another example of various municipalities working and collaborating together towards common goals and objectives. Deer hunting ordinances are being adopted and amended in many cities throughout the KCMO area to allow for managed hunts. So far this has been a valiant effort by all municipal governments and MDC will remain vigilant to assist the KC Metro with public safety atop the list.

– Joe DeBold, Urban Wildlife Biologist

## Prairie chickens...to be or not to be

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

that remove all plant material annually to a rotational management system. The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) is working with landowners to return to this more natural management plan where possible and habitat improvement is being seen.

Prized as a game bird, hunting of prairie chickens was allowed in parts of Missouri until 1907. They are still hunted today – with cameras – especially during the spring when the males gather on leks and perform their mating dance to attract the females. Their haunting sound,

called booming, can be heard for over a mile and is so special a sound that once heard, it is never forgotten.

In an effort to ensure that the booming of the greater prairie chicken is not lost in Missouri, MDC recently completed a five-year project where birds were captured in Kansas and relocated to appropriate habitat in Missouri. At this point, the signs are good that the project will be a success. Birds are surviving and breeding, but only time will tell if sizeable populations are to be or not to be again in our state.

– Rebekah Foote, Education Specialist

## Burr Oak Woods Volunteer Milestones

We have wonderful volunteers at Burr Oak Woods whose hard work and dedication mean a lot to us! We'd like to recognize the following volunteers for having reached service milestones this year:

**100 hours:** Marla Martin, Lucy Quinn

**200 hours:** John Fritz

**300 hours:** Jean Jones

**400 hours:** Lowell Burns, Stephanie Baldridge, Kathryn Brown

**500 hours:** Deanna Rittel, Theresa Enderle

**750 hours:** Alex Rittel, Andi Rittel, John Rittel

**1000 hours:** Donna Braughton, Pam Bussell

**1500 hours:** Michael O'Keefe

## HOLIDAY HOURS

**The Discovery Center** will be closed  
Thursday, November 22 and Friday,  
November 23 and  
Tuesday, December 25

### Burr Oak Woods Nature Center

will be closed to the public:  
Thursday and Friday, November 22 & 23  
Thanksgiving and the Friday after  
Tuesday, December 25 – Christmas Day  
Tuesday, January 1 – New Year's Day

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